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FEDERAL-STATE COOPERATIVE
SNOW SURVEYS AND IRRIGATION WATER FORECASTS

for

Rio Grande Drainage Basin

By

Division of Irrigation, Soil Conservation Service
United States Department of Agriculture
and
Colorado Agricultural Experiment Station

Data included in this report were obtained by the agencies named above in cooperation with the U. S. Forest Service, National Park Service, State Engineers of Colorado, Wyoming and New Mexico and other Federal, State and local organizations.



As of

MAR. 1, 1950

WATER SUPPLY OUTLOOK

RIO GRANDE AND CANADIAN DRAINAGE BASINS

MARCH 1, 1950

The water supply outlook for irrigated areas served by the Rio Grande and its tributaries in San Luis Valley is slightly above normal but much less favorable than for March 1 a year ago. On the extreme upper Rio Grande and along the Sangre de Cristo range the high elevation snow cover is definitely low. There is no snow below 9,000 feet on the drainage. On northern New Mexico tributaries the snow cover is about 75 percent of normal. Soil moisture conditions throughout the drainage are reported as dry.

RIO GRANDE

Snow accumulation along the Continental Divide near Wolf Creek Pass and for a short distance north and south is relatively high. This is a local condition since the snow at Cumbres Pass is near average and there appears to be a deficiency on the mountains north of the river and extending along the Sangre de Cristo range into northern New Mexico. Precipitation in the valley area has been much less than average during the fall and winter months and soil moisture is reported as very dry. Storage in irrigation reservoirs is much above a year ago and the past ten year average.

On the headwaters of the Rio Chama the snow cover is 81 percent of normal, about one-half of March 1, 1949. Elsewhere in northern New Mexico the present snow cover is very low and much less than last year. Soil moisture conditions are reported as fair to poor in the middle Rio Grande irrigated areas. El Vado Reservoir has been lowered materially during the past month and now contains 92,000 acre feet as compared to 100,000 a year ago on this date. This is about twice the past ten-year average.

The combined storage in Elephant Butte and Caballo reservoirs is now 920,000 acre feet, about 250,000 above March 1, 1949. Precipitation in the lower Rio Grande Valley has been sub-normal and soil moisture conditions are described as dry.

In the Pecos River headwaters near Santa Fe the snow cover is about 65 percent of normal and 60 percent of last year. Storage in Alamogordo and McMillan reservoirs now total 116,000 acre feet which is nearly three times a year ago and well above normal. In the Carlsbad area soil moisture conditions are dry.

CANADIAN RIVER

On the tributaries of the Canadian River, the snow water content is only 50 percent of normal. There is practically no snow below 9,000 feet. Conchas reservoir has in storage 316,000 acre feet as compared to 309,000 a year ago. On the Tucumcari project precipitation has been deficient and soil moisture and crop conditions are described as fair.

MEMORANDUM MADE TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

OPEN FOR ANSWER.

The Chinese have a right to independence of Manchuria. They now have a government which is called a republic, and has assumed the name of the Republic of China, and the government of Manchuria is now controlled by the Republic of China. The Republic of China has been recognized by the United States, and by many other countries, both in Europe and America. The Chinese are now independent, and are no longer ruled by the Japanese. The Japanese are now in control of Korea, and are also in control of Manchuria, and they are trying to expand their influence, and to extend their power over the Chinese. The Chinese are now independent, and are no longer ruled by the Japanese. The Japanese are now in control of Korea, and are also in control of Manchuria, and they are trying to expand their influence, and to extend their power over the Chinese.

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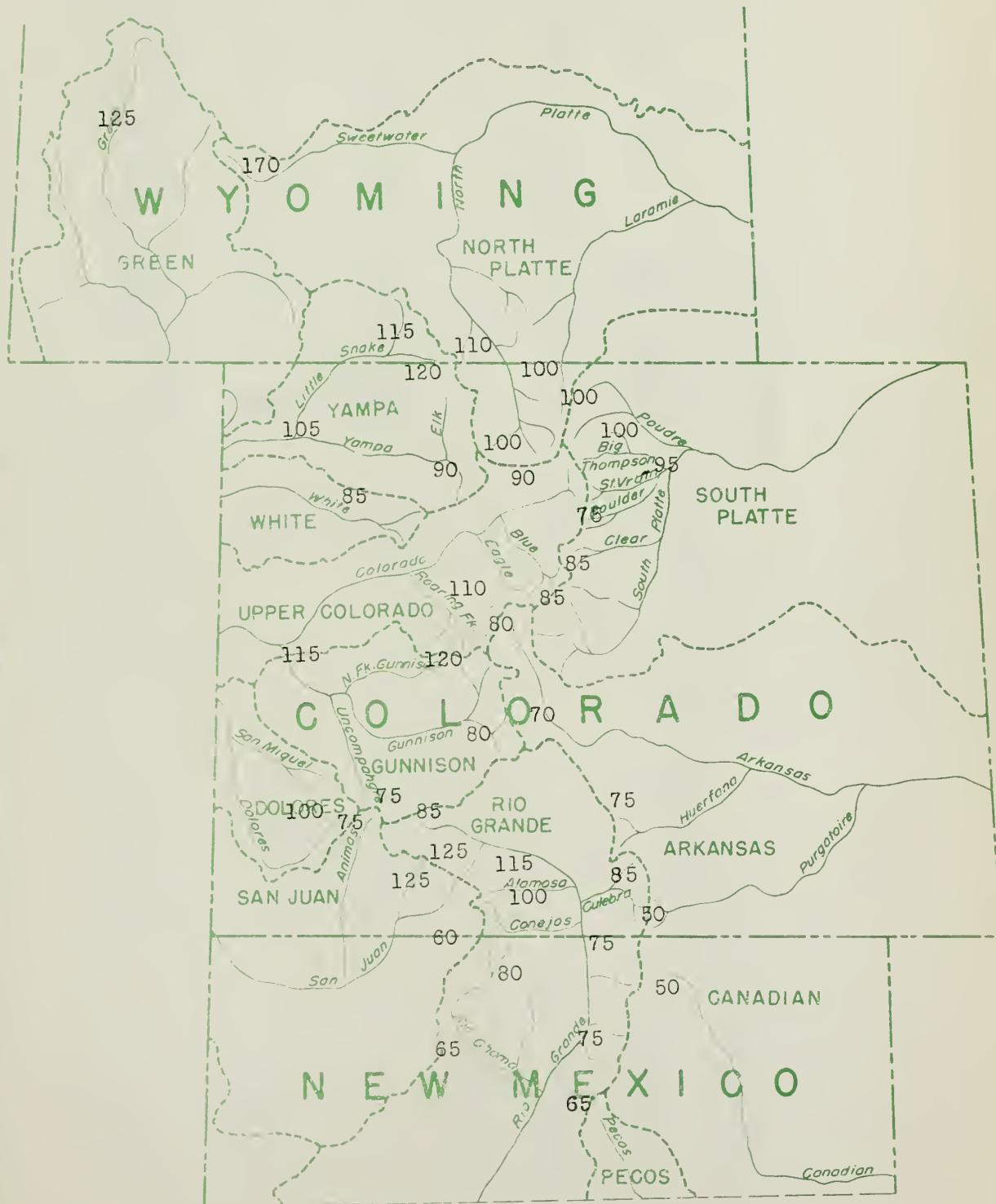
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WATER CONTENT OF SNOW ON THE WATERSHEDS OF
PLATTE, ARKANSAS, UPPER COLORADO AND RIO GRANDE BASINS
BASED ON SNOW SURVEYS MADE APPROXIMATELY FIRST DAY OF MONTH
In Percent of Normal
March 1, 1950

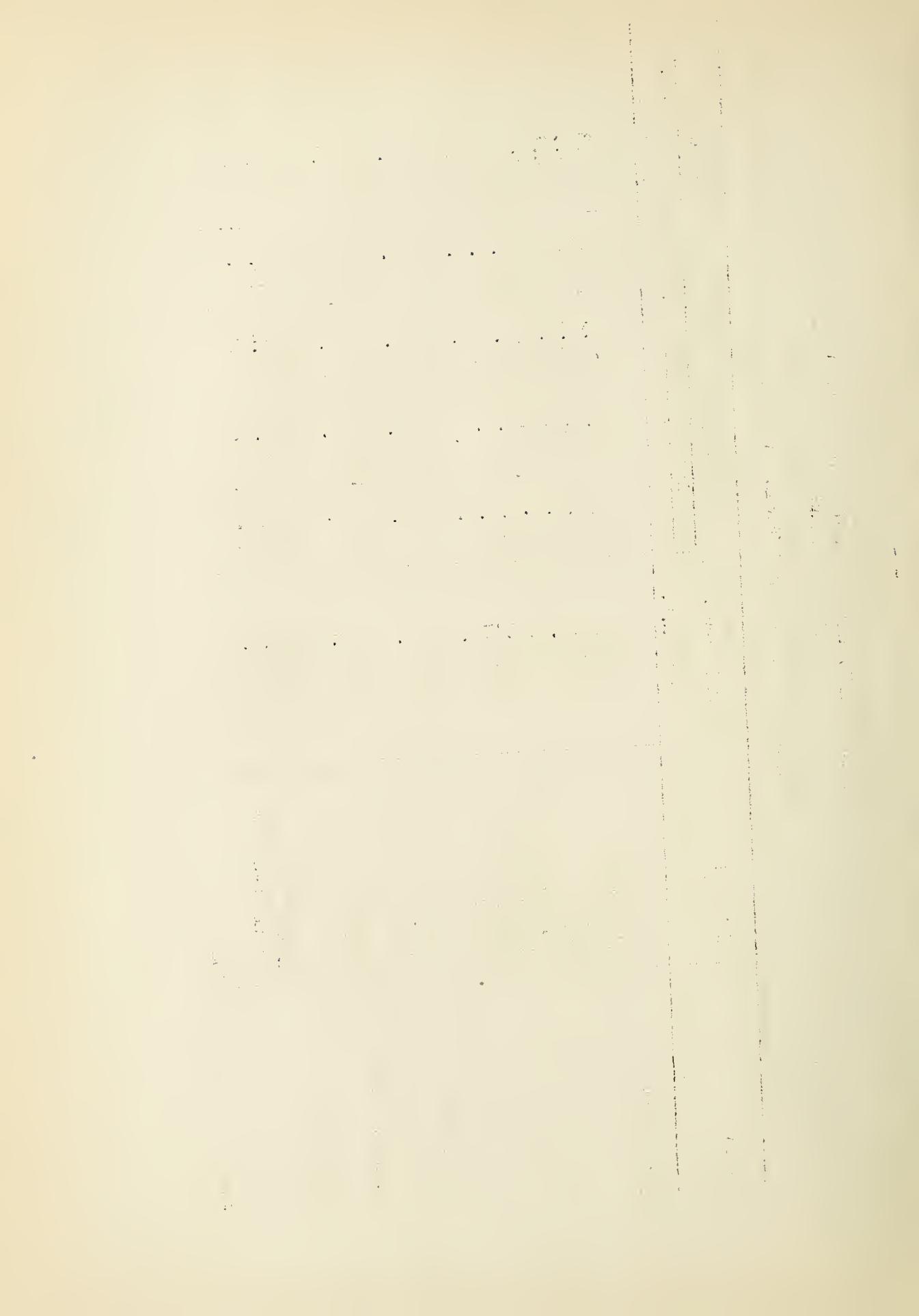


SNOW SURVEYS AND IRRIGATION WATER FORECASTS
RIO GRANDE BASIN

STATUS OF RESERVOIR STORAGE, MARCH 1, 1950

STREAM	RESERVOIR	USABLE CAPACITY 1000 A.F.	THOUSANDS OF ACRE FEET IN STORAGE			
			1950	1949	About March 1 1948	1947
RIO GRANDE	Rio Grande	45.8	29.8	17.5	22.3	4.8
	Santa Maria	45.0	22.9	4.9	5.4	4.4
	Sanchez	103.0	12.8	5.4	8.6	6.1
	Terrace	17.7	7.1	1.7	5.6	3.2
	Continental	26.7	18.7	3.2	3.0	1.2
	Elephant Butte	2273.7	650.5	519.1	416.3	543.7
	Caballo	365.0	270.2	160.2	149.2	288.9
	El Vado	226.0	92.0	101.0	7.3	30.6
CHAMA RIVER	Conchas	600.0	316.0	309.2	353.1	366.8
	Alamogordo McMillan-Avalon	148.0 45.0	100.0 16.0	30.4 7.1	32.4 8.1	49.4 7.2
CANADIAN RIVER	Pecos River	148.0 45.0	100.0 16.0	30.4 7.1	32.4 8.1	49.4 7.2
	PECOS RIVER	148.0 45.0	100.0 16.0	30.4 7.1	32.4 8.1	49.4 7.2

*Some for shorter periods



SNOW SURVEYS AND IRRIGATION WATER FORECASTS
for
RIO GRANDE BASIN
March 1, 1950

SUMMARY OF MARCH 1 SNOW SURVEYS AND COMPARISON OF DATA WITH THAT OF PREVIOUS YEARS
BY WATERSHEDS

WATERSHEDS	Snow Depth			Water Content			Snow Density			1950 Water Content in percent of Eleven Year Avg.*		
	Eleven Year Avg.*	In.	In.	Eleven Year Avg.*	In.	In.	1949	1950	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Rio Grande (Colo.)	38.0	48.5	34.0	10.2	14.4	10.7	10	10	27	30	32	105
Upper Rio Grande	40.7	57.8	42.7	11.2	18.7	13.9	3	28	32	33	33	124
Alamosa River	42.6	48.7	43.5	10.9	18.7	12.8	2	26	32	29	29	117
Conejos River	46.2	53.4	41.3	13.3	17.0	13.7	2	29	32	33	33	103
Culebra River	35.8	39.7	24.0	9.3	9.8	7.7	1	26	25	32	32	83
Rio Grande (N.M.)	25.5	28.8	16.8	6.9	8.3	4.3	12	27	29	26	26	62
Chama River	38.1	46.1	30.6	11.0	15.5	8.9	4	29	34	29	29	81
Pecos River	19.6	21.1	11.6	5.0	5.6	3.3	3	26	27	28	28	66
Canadian River	23.0	26.9	14.7	6.4	6.9	3.1	4	28	26	21	21	48

*Some for shorter periods

PRECIPITATION DATA *

WATERSHED	STATE	Precipitation October 1 to February 28	Departure from normal Inches	Precipitation February		Departure from Normal Inches
				Inches	Inches	
Canadian	New Mexico	0.98	-2.32	0.04	0.04	-0.65
Rio Grande	Colorado	3.41	-2.86	0.50	0.50	-0.71
Rio Grande (N)	New Mexico	3.78	-1.43	0.45	0.45	-0.72
Rio Grande (S)	New Mexico	1.30	-1.34	0.24	0.24	-0.16
Pecos	New Mexico	1.57	-2.42	0.15	0.15	-0.55

*Average of Selected High Elevation Stations

RIO GRANDE DRAINAGE SNOW SURVEYS
March 1, 1950

Drainage Basin and Snow Course	No. and state	Location						Snow Cover Measurements				Past Record
		sec.	Twp.	Range	Elev.	Date of Survey	Snow Depth (Inches)	Water Content (Inches)	Yrs. of Rec.	Av. Water Content (Inches)		
RIO GRANDE IN COLORADO	26 Colo.	4	37N	2E	10000	2/28	84.6	31.0	27.7	13	23.1	
Wolf Creek Pass	26 " "	13	40N	4W	9350	2/28	28.0	6.5	16.8	12	6.3	
Upper Rio Grande	27 "	15	36N	5E	9600	2/28	26.4	7.0	7.1	13	5.3	
Silver Lakes	47 "	25	33N	6E	9300	3/1	24.7	8.2	8.6	13	6.7	
River Springs	49 "	22	28S	7W	9300	2/28	18.5	4.9	10.8	12	7.4	
LaVeta Pass #2	74 "	30	37N	4E	11500	3/2	60.6	18.6	--	10	16.4	
Summitville	76 "	17	32N	5E	10000	2/27	57.8	19.2	12.3	13	19.8	
Cumbres Pass #2	77 "	8	41N	2W	9700	3/1	15.6	4.3	8.3	11	4.3	
Santa Maria	80 "		37.2N	105.2W	10000	3/1	24.0	7.7	9.8	10	9.3	
Culebra	82 "		29N	72W	8200	2/26	0	0	4.7	9	3.4	
Ft. Garland	84 "	13	36N	4W	9950	2/24	48.4	16.4	--	--	--	
Platoro	108 "	22	35N	4E	9450	3/3	30.2	10.3	22.7	--	--	
West Conejos	109 "	25	32N	5E	10100	2/28	62.0	19.5	12.9	--	--	
La Manga	110 "	24	41N	5W	10300	2/28	29.4	6.8	--	--	--	
Pyramid	122 "	26	42N	3W	10900	2/27	25.7	6.5	--	--	--	
Spr. Creek Pass	123 "	2	41N	2E	10000	2/25	16.0	3.4	7.7	--	--	
Pool Table Mt.	124 "	19	40N	1E	9300	2/25	22.1	5.5	11.2	--	--	
Lake Humphreys	125 "	32	45N	3E	10000	2/28	14.7	2.6	6.8	--	--	
Cochetopa Pass	126 "	12	Average for drainage				34.0	10.7	10.6		10.2	
UPPER RIO GRANDE	26 Colo.	4	37N	2E	10000	2/28	84.6	31.0	35.4	13	23.1	
Wolf Creek Pass	26 "	13	40N	4W	9350	2/28	28.0	6.5	12.5	12	6.3	
Upper Rio Grande	27 "	8	41N	2E	9700	3/1	15.6	4.3	8.3	11	4.3	
Santa Maria	80 "	26	41N	5W	10300	2/28	29.4	6.8	--	--	--	
Pyramid	122 "	2	42N	3W	10900	2/27	25.7	6.5	--	--	--	
Spr. Creek Pass	123 "	19	41N	2E	10000	2/25	16.0	3.4	--	--	--	
Pool Table Mt.	124 "	32	40N	1E	9300	2/25	22.1	5.5	--	--	--	
Lake Humphreys	125 "		Average for drainage				22.1	10.7	10.6		10.2	

RIO GRANDE DRAINAGE SNOW SURVEYS
March 1, 1950

Drainage Basin and Snow Course	No. and State	Sec.	Twp.	Range	Elev.	Date Survey	Snow Depth (Inches)	Snow Cover Measurements (Inches)			Past Record
								1950	1949	1948	Av. Water Content (Inches)
ALAMOSA RIVER											
Silver Lakes	47 Colo.	15	36N	5E	9600	2/28	26.4	7.0	11.4	7.1	5.3
Summitville	"	30	37N	4E	11500	3/2	60.6	18.6	26.0	--	16.4
CONEJOS RIVER			Average for drainage				43.5		18.7	7.1	10.9
River Springs	49 Colo.	25	33N	6E	9300	3/1	24.7	8.2	9.0	8.6	6.7
Cumbres Pass #2	77 "	17	32N	5E	10000	2/27	57.8	19.2	24.9	12.3	19.8
Platoro	108 "	22	36N	4W	9950	2/24	48.4	16.4	22.7	--	--
West Conejos	109 "	25	35N	4E	9450	3/3	30.2	10.3	12.9	--	--
La Manga	110 "	24	32N	5E	10100	2/28	62.0	19.5	26.2	--	--
CULEBRA RIVER			Average for drainage				41.3		13.7	10.4	13.3
Culebra	82 Colo.		37.2N	105.2W	10000	3/1	24.0	7.7	9.8	11.4	9.3
RIO GRANDE IN NEW MEXICO											
CHAMA RIVER											
Cumbres Pass #2	77 Colo.	17	32N	5E	10000	2/27	57.8	19.2	24.9	12.3	19.8
Canjilon	6 N.M.	4	26N	6E	9500	--			13.3	10.3	13.9
Pay Role	15 "	16	28N	7E	9700	3/1	31.4	7.4	15.4	11.3	9.2
Chama Divide	17 "		36.9N	106.7W	7750	3/1	6.3	1.4	8.2	4.8	5.5
Chamita	18 "		36.9N	106.7W	8500	3/1	27.0	7.5	13.3	7.8	9.4
Bateman	29 "	5	26N	6E	9300	3/1	34.2	11.4	--	--	--
PECOS RIVER			Average for drainage				30.6		8.9	15.5	9.1
Aspen Grove*	4 N.M.	8	28N	15E	9500	3/1	13.6	4.0	4.5	6.1	4.9
Panchuela	20 "	25	24N	16E	9200	3/1	4.5	1.2	4.6	5.0	3.9
Big Tesuque*	21 "	23	22N	13E	9000	3/1	16.8	4.8	7.6	8.2	6.2
Gallinas	25 "	22	22N	13E	10100	2/26	0	0	5.4	3.6	4.5
			Average for drainage								5.6
											5.0

*On adjacent drainage

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RIO GRANDE DRAINAGE SNOW SURVEYS
March 1, 1950

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Drainage Basin and Snow Course	Location				Snow Cover Measurements				Past Record Av. Water Content (Inches)
	No. and State	Sec.	Twp.	Range	Date Survey	Snow Depth (Inches)	Water Content (Inches)	Yrs. of Record	
Red River	1 N.M.	29	28N	RIO GRANDE IN NEW MEXICO	1950	1949	1948	1948	8.0
Taos Canyon	2 "	10	25N	9500	3/1	20.9	5.9	7.7	6.8
Aspen Grove	4 "	12	18N	15E	9000	3/1	5.8	6.9	4.9
Lee Ranch	5 "	3	18N	10E	9100	3/1	12.5	6.1	7.3
Canjilon	6 "	4	26N	4E	9050	3/1	13.6	10.5	13.9
Hematite Park*	9 "	8	28N	6E	9500	—	17.1	10.3	5.5
Tres Ritos	12 "	23	22N	15E	9500	3/1	—	1.3	6.2
Pay Role	15 "	16	28N	13E	9000	3/1	7E	5.2	9.2
Chama Divide	17 "	22	36.9N	106.7W	9700	3/1	7E	6.0	5.5
Chamita	18 "	22	36.9N	106.7W	7750	3/1	—	7.4	9.4
Cordova	19 "	27	22N	13E	8500	3/1	10100	7.5	10.0
Panchuela #2	20 "	17	19N	12E	8300	3/1	28.1	6.3	3.9
Big Tesque	21 "	8	18N	11E	10000	3/1	16.8	13.1	6.2
Elk Cabin	24 "	8	18N	11E	8250	2/28	0	4.6	5.9
Rio En Medio	26 "	8	18N	11E	10400	3/1	21.6	5.5	—
Baca	27 "	33	24N	5E	9000	3/1	22.9	5.4	—
Quemazon	28 "	34	20N	5E	9500	3/1	26.1	5.0	—
Bateman	29 "	5	26N	6E	9300	3/1	32.4	11.4	—
					Average for drainage		16.8	4.3	7.7
								8.3	6.9
					CANADIAN RIVER				
Hematite Park	9 N.M.	8	28N	15E	9500	3/1	11.0	1.3	5.2
Ocate Mesa	10 "	25	24N	16E	9200	3/1	6.9	1.3	3.9
Tres Ritos*	12 "	23	22N	13E	9000	3/1	12.9	3.6	6.2
Cordova*	19 "	22	22N	13E	10100	3/1	28.1	6.3	10.0
					Average for drainage		14.7	3.1	6.4

*On adjacent drainage

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Federal - State - Private

COOPERATIVE SNOW SURVEYS

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Furnishes the basic data
necessary for forecasting
water supply for irrigation,
domestic and municipal water
supply, hydro-electric power
generation, navigation,
mining and industry

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“WATER IS THE WEST'S GREATEST RESOURCE”